

People strategically protect different aspects of their sexual reputation based on their relationship goals.

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ABSTRACT

Reputation management is integral to being part of a community and creating social connections. We propose that individuals may prioritise protecting different aspects of their sexual reputation to facilitate different relationship strategies. Specifically, people seeking long term relationships may prioritise sexual warmth and sexual morality, whereas people seeking a short term relationship may prioritise sexual competence. The current research consists of two pre-registered studies, both conducted on Amazon's Mechanical Turk with a total of 639 participants. Overall, we found that participants were more protective of the reputational aspects that are most relevant to their relationship goals. Study 1 found that sexually restricted participants were more concerned for their sexual warmth and sexual morality than sexually unrestricted participants who were more concerned for their sexual competence. Study 2 manipulated socio-sexual orientation with two conditions: seeking a long term relationship (sexually restricted) vs seeking a short term relationship (sexually unrestricted). Study 2 found the same results as Study 1 with the exception that there was no significant difference between conditions for sexual competence. This shows that sexual competence may be of equal value when people are looking for both long term and short term relationships. This research shows that people can prioritise different aspects of their reputation in order to achieve their relationship goals. It is important in understanding the use of impression management of sexual reputation and how this effects our relationship outcomes.

Romantic relationships are an integral facet of human life and social interaction and how we present ourselves is an important part of making these connections with others. We propose that people may be able to swap and change which features of their personalities they show to others depending on the type of relationship they are trying to attract. This is an important observation when looking at how individuals may not prioritise seemingly important aspects of personality when they do not care what the person perceiving them thinks. The broad purpose of the current research is to examine how individuals prioritise different areas of their sexual reputation depending on their relationship strategies. This will be examined through different reputational aspects: sexual competence, sexual warmth and sexual morality. These areas have been found to be important in person perception in previous literature and are therefore areas of one's reputation that need to be protected (Goodwin, Piazza & Rozin, 2014; Fiske & Cuddy, 2002). People manage their reputation based on current goals or strategies and therefore individuals will prioritise or choose to protect different areas of their reputations in order to be perceived in a certain way in order to achieve their current goals. This research first looks at how an individual's socio-sexual orientation (people's sexual attitudes and behaviours) can influence their concern and protection of their sexual reputation and then goes on to examine the causal relationship between relationship strategies and sexual reputation concern and protection.

Reputation

Reputation can be considered the key to unlocking social benefits within a community and therefore people have a drive to protect it (Wu, Balliet, & Lange, 2016). When a person is considered to uphold a good, and most importantly moral, reputation then they will be allowed access to communal benefits within their in-group. Reputation is a hugely important aspect of an individual's life, contributing to their sense of belonging within their community and developing their own identity (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). One aspect of reputation that

is significant is sexual reputation. Sexual reputation can affect and determine different outcomes within social relationships and relationship strategies.

There are a variety of perspectives on sexual reputation including, gender differences and bias in social psychology (Reid, Elliot, Webber, 2011; Hamilton & Armstrong, 2009; Carns, 1973) and, evolutionary psychology and mating (Reynolds & Baumeister, 2018; McAndrew, 2014). Humans use the process of impression management to navigate social norms and manage their personal impression and reputation within their communities. Impression management is the process by which an individual can attempt to control the impressions that others form of them. There are two driving factors behind impression management; impression motivation (the drive to create certain impressions) and impression construction (people may alter their behaviours to influence the impressions that others have of them) (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). These drives to create the “norm” or “socially approved” impression on others is what drives impression management in different areas of our lives. This drive is affected by three factors; goal relevance, valued desire of outcomes, and existing discrepancy between one’s current image and the image one desires to display to others (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). These factors are important to think about in terms of how individuals choose to protect their sexual reputation, as it may be dependent on their current relationship goals and what image they already have in a mating context or what image they desire to have. All of which are all centred around what relationship outcomes they are pursuing at the time.

Concern for reputation arises from a fear of social exclusion and not being able to create social connections within a community because of the way that other people perceive you (Cavassa, Pagliaro, Guidetti, 2014). This judgement from others leads people to think about what aspects of their self are most important in how they want to be seen. This

therefore, relates to what aspects may be prioritised in different situations, depending on what one believes other people want to see in them.

Interpersonal judgement

The majority of the current literature on sexual reputation looks at how individuals use other people's sexual reputation to diminish or compete with rival's who are also seeking mates. Both men and women are more likely to share information about a rival that conflicted with the potential partners mating strategy, therefore using a rival's reputation, especially information about their promiscuity, to diminish them in front of a potential partner (Wyckoff, Buss & Asao, 2018). Women will transmit information that will harm a rival woman and withhold information that will help a rival if they feel threatened by the other woman in terms of partner competition. Women also tend to gossip more about sexual antics when another woman is dressed more provocatively (Reynolds & Baumeister, 2018). This is because dressing provocatively can be seen as a threat or a direct form of competition (Reynolds & Baumeister, 2018). It is evident that gossip is used as a form of female aggression to hurt another's reputation (McAndrew, 2014) and that both men and women will seek out information about their rivals that will be most useful in social competition (McAndrew & Milenkovic, 2002). Interestingly, women are more focused on other women's promiscuity and infidelity whereas men are more concerned with other men's inability to have sex (McAndrew & Milenkovic, 2002). This type of competitor derogation is found to be present in romantic rivalry but not in friendship rivalry (Schützwohl, Joshi & Abdur-Raxak, 2019) and therefore may be more related to relationship strategies. However, there has not been any literature on how individuals may prioritize different aspects of their sexual reputation, by making sacrifices, to achieve their relationship goals. A lot of the literature has focused on gender-specific differences in how sexual reputation is perceived and managed.

The current study aims to address this gap in the literature by examining how both men and women manage their sexual impressions by protecting their sexual reputation.

Through the past literature, it is evident that reputation is hugely significant to one's social relationships, both personal and as part of a community. Reputation is clearly socially valuable and there is an intuitive drive to attend to cues in situations where one's reputation may be at stake (Sperber & Baumard, 2012), but what parts of one's reputation are most valuable? The value of an individual's reputation depends on the context of the reputation and their current goals or motivations. The context and goals can be measured using Fiske & Cuddy (2002) and Goodwin, Piazza, & Rozin (2014) models of character. Fiske & Cuddy (2002) created a model of stereotype content that showed that many individuals in out-groups are viewed as warm but not competent or competent but not warm and that social structure correlated with perceived warmth and competence. Perceived social status predicted perceived competence, whereas perceived competition predicted perceived lack of warmth (Fiske & Cuddy, 2002). This mixed model of perceived warmth and competence in stereotyped out-groups can be applied to this research as a basis for character aspects that many people have and perceive to be important.

Another aspect of an individual's character that is perceived to be important is their moral character. Moral character can reflect both "social functionalist considerations and more symbolic, identity-based considerations in person perception" (Goodwin, Piazza & Rozin, 2014). Goodwin, Piazza & Rozin (2014) determined, in several correlational and experimental studies, the importance of character information in all round impression formation, and that it may be seen as the most important dependent variable of interest in person perception research. They reiterated that moral character information is important in areas of person perception, identity, trait controllability and responsibility (Goodwin, Piazza & Rozin, 2014). Warmth captures several aspects of human sociality and can be seen as

tolerance, good natured-ness, friendliness, and sincerity. Similarly, morality encompasses kindness, sincerity, trustworthiness, and tolerance so therefore there is overlap between these two traits. However, Goodwin (2015) found that morality and warmth are distinct from one another as both moral information and social warmth information independently predicted overall impressions, which shows that each trait contained predictive information that the other did not. An important link between these two studies is that it is clear that each dimension of one's character point to different socio-functional aspects that contribute to overall impressions. Morality is important as it shows the nature of one's intentions and whether those are directed toward being harmful or helpful. Competence is significant as it indicates how effectively one can carry out one's intentions. Lastly, warmth is important as it shows how successful one is in recruiting a social network to support their intentions (Goodwin, 2015).

It is important to differentiate between the three aspects of character traits (warmth, competence and morality) that will be used to establish choices predicted from individual differences. These models show how people prioritise judging different aspects of self and this can be seen in social relationships as people prioritise what they think will attract the kind of partner they are looking for and the traits that they feel other people desire in them. This is also relevant in how individuals not only prioritise their own character traits but also in how they perceive other people's character traits. Goal relevance in a mating context will be a factor in what individuals choose to prioritise when judging others. When an individual has no goal in mind then warmth and morality are primary in forming impressions of others. However, competence may take precedence when one's specific goals are likely to be affected by the other person's competence. Personal relevance of other people's competence and warmth is the key to understanding what motivates individuals in processing information about others (Carrier, Dompnier & Yzervyt, 2019). Vonasch & Sjästad (2019) found that

people who were more focused on the future were more willing to make a personal sacrifice in order to protect their moral reputation. In terms of mating strategies, this could mean that people who are seeking longer term romantic relationships compared to short term sexual relationships, will be more willing to protect their sexual morality as it will impact on how they achieve their sexual goal.

Impressions of others is important as it is a reflection of the character traits that we find important in ourselves at any particular time, and this can change depending on the current goal relevance of those traits. We are presuming that people manage their impression strategically, depending on the situation and the specific goals that they are trying to accomplish. Individuals have different goals, and this translates to how they may prioritise different aspects of their reputations. Specifically, this paper is studying how the context of mating affects which aspects of one's reputation they are likely to prioritise in order to achieve their mating goals. It is of interest to see what individuals are willing to sacrifice to protect their sexual reputation as it has impacts on their social relationships, which are such an important part of being a human being. This can be seen in research by Vonasch, Reynolds, Winegard & Baumeister (2017) where they found that people are willing to make extreme sacrifices, even death, to protect their moral reputation. The current research will use this rationale as the basis for the protection of different reputational aspects, under the assumption that one's moral reputation will be protected with the utmost vigilance.

Socio-sexuality

The Socio-sexual Orientation Inventory is a questionnaire developed by Simpson & Gangestad (1991) to assess individual differences in people's socio-sexual attitudes and behaviours. Individuals who have low scores on the inventory are classified as 'restricted' socio-sexual orientation. This individual typically insists on commitment and closeness with their partner before engaging in sex, will have few sexual relationships and will rarely have a

one-night stand. Whereas, individuals who score higher on the socio-sexual orientation inventory are considered 'unrestricted' and typically feel comfortable engaging in sex without commitment or closeness, tend to have more sexual partners and one-night stands (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991). The socio-sexual orientation inventory is a measure of individual differences, but it can also tell us about how these differences may affect mating strategies and therefore what goals one has in terms of their social relationships. For example, someone who has an unrestricted socio-sexual orientation should be more likely to protect their sexual competence reputation than the quality of their relationship reputation, as they are generally looking for more short term, casual sexual relationships (and vice versa with more sexually restricted individuals). Socio-sexuality may possess stable, trait-like features but the way in which it is portrayed physically changes over the lifespan (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991). This is an important feature of socio-sexuality as it can manifest in different forms in different situations, i.e. during a person's marriage, socio-sexuality might be evident in either susceptibility to being drawn out of the relationship by attractive partners or willingness to remain in unsatisfactory marital relationships. In the current study, this is relevant as the socio-sexual orientation inventory may depict age differences in the ways in which socio-sexuality is displayed and how this then impacts on mating strategies and perceived reputation damage. Simpson & Gangestad (1999) proposed two general categories of mating tactics; direct competition tactics, which involves making comparisons between the self and competitors and is seen in short term mating contexts (generally unrestricted individuals), and the second category involves displaying positive self attributes which should be valued in long term relationships (generally restricted individuals). The socio-sexual orientation inventory shows that our priorities may depend on what we are looking for in a partner. Therefore, people might also care about protecting the equivalent aspects of their reputation.

The sexually unrestricted and restricted individuals may be analogous to mating strategies where sexually unrestricted individuals may be more likely to prioritise sexual competence and therefore be looking for more short term (casual) relationships. Whereas sexually restricted individuals may be more likely to prioritise sexual warmth and therefore be looking for more long term (committed) relationships. There are different aspects of one's self to emphasise when we are looking for sexual partners and this is goal dependent on what sort of relationship an individual wants to achieve. We can assume that an individual looking for a short-term relationship will be more likely to protect their sexual competence reputation over their sexual warmth reputation as it makes that individual more likely to achieve their mating goals. In contrast, an individual looking for a long term relationship will be more likely to protect their sexual warmth reputation over their sexual competence reputation as this reputation is more likely to help them to achieve their mating goals.

Gender differences in impression management

There have been some gender differences in which particular impression management strategies are preferred when it comes to mating strategies and sexual reputation. Men and women tend to have different ideals of socialisation. Men will trade-off intimate relationships for a higher number of friends, whereas women will trade-off number of friends for higher levels of intimacy with a romantic partner (Vigil, 2007). This could be related to one's competence and warmth, where women seek warmth in their social circles, men tend to seek competence by seeming as though they can maintain a large number of relationships (Vigil, 2007). Relatedly, a study on sexual self-perception found that males rate themselves higher on explicitly sexual dimensions such as sexual responsiveness and experience, whereas females perceive themselves to be more romantic and sexually attractive (Garcia & Carrigan, 2008). Therefore, men rate themselves higher in aspects of their sexual competence and women perceive themselves to be more sexually warm. Men and women also have different

reasons for engaging in different forms of mating strategies, for example, men engage in casual sex to enhance their reputation amongst other men, referred to as 'ego sex' (Carns, 1973), whereas women who engage in casual sex are more likely to say that it was an attempt to increase long term commitment from their partner (Regan & Dreyer, 1999). One study used a hypothetical vignette discussing a man and woman hooking up at a party and then going on a date that ends with a kiss and nothing else, whereas previously they had had sex. Participants were asked to see why this would have happened from both the man's and woman's perspectives and there were very different reasons as to why their date would end with a kiss when they have already had sex. Participants thought that the man only kissed her because it was a pity date whereas they thought that the woman only kissed him because she wanted a relationship and was trying to correct her reputation in a form of 'redemptive chastity' (Reid, Elliot & Webber, 2011). This difference in perception shows the difference in the way people think about men and women within the 'hook up' culture; that for men it is a stable trait to want to engage in sex but for women it is an impulsive behaviour that requires impression management after the fact in order to "correct" her sexual reputation.

Another study found that although women are more freely participating in their sexuality, compared to a more conservative past, that they are still more likely to feel shame, regret and embarrassment resulting in impression management of their reputation whereas men are congratulated and respected by their peers for their promiscuity (Pham, 2017). These studies show the emotional and perceptual differences in men and women's sexuality, where although it is evident that there has been a cultural liberalism within sexuality, there are still underlying differences in perceptions and the drive to manage one's reputation. However, it can be seen that sometimes the stigma around sexuality that one perceives actually perpetuates the gender differences more than the statistics and actual preferences of each gender. This is shown in University settings where the 'hook up' culture is a part of the

University culture and this can be a mismatch for many students in the way that they were raised which then perpetuates the reputation management that is seen throughout one's sexuality (Hamilton & Armstrong, 2009). These gender differences in sexuality can reflect how people manage their sexual reputation. The research is displaying a general pattern that men rate themselves higher on aspects of their sexual competence and women rate themselves higher on aspects of their sexual warmth (Garcia & Carrigan, 2008) and that men look for more casual sexual encounters, whereas women are seeking more serious sexual relationships. This pattern shows strategic protection and impression management of the most goal relevant aspects of one's sexual reputation.

Current research

The previous literature presented builds a framework for the current study, where the integration of impression management and reputation protection are looked at from a mating strategy perspective to understand the ways in which people prioritise different aspects of their 'self' to achieve their romantic goals.

The purpose of the current research is to investigate what aspects of reputation people prioritise and which aspects individuals are willing to make sacrifices for in order to protect different aspects of their sexual reputation. Specifically, their moral sexual reputation, sexual competence reputation, and sexual warmth reputation. We also aim to see if an individual's socio-sexual orientation inventory score predicts which category (if any) of their reputation they are willing to sacrifice to protect. The current research consisted of two studies. The first study will look at one's socio-sexual orientation and the relationship this has in predicting reputation protection. The second study will be experiment based and contain two conditions; long term relationship vs short term relationship, therefore manipulating participants socio-sexual orientation. Based on the past literature and the importance of goal relevance in determining reputation protection and impression management we can

hypothesise that: (1) people with high socio-sexual orientation scores should be more concerned about their short term relationships goals i.e. they will be more willing to sacrifice to protect their sexual competence reputation than their sexual warmth reputation as competence can be seen to be more goal relevant, (2) people with low socio-sexual orientation scores should be more concerned about their long term relationship goals i.e. they should be more willing to sacrifice to protect their sexual warmth than their sexual competence reputation as it is more likely to be goal relevant and (3) that, independent of their socio-sexual orientation score, participants highest concern (and protection) will be for their moral reputation.

Study 1: Socio-sexual orientation study

The current study aims to investigate what aspects of reputation people prioritise and which aspects individuals are willing to make sacrifices for in order to protect their sexual reputation. This survey examined whether an individual's socio-sexual orientation inventory score predicts which domain (if any) of their reputation they are willing to sacrifice to protect.

We predict that individuals who indicate a restricted socio-sexual orientation score should be more concerned about their sexual warmth reputation and that this will lead to increased protection of their sexual warmth reputation. We also predict that individuals who indicate an unrestricted socio-sexual orientation score should be more concerned about their sexual competence reputation and this will lead to increased protection of their sexual competence reputation. Lastly, we predict that regardless of one's socio-sexual orientation score, that participants will be concerned for their moral sexual reputation and this, again, will lead to protection of their moral sexual reputation. The participants concern for each domain of their sexual reputation would mediate the relationship between their socio-sexual orientation score and their willingness to protect their sexual reputation.

Method

Participants. The current study proposed enlisting 330 participants, however, more participants completed the survey than was expected and there was a total of 348 American participants who were recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Of the 348 participants, 39 people were excluded as they did not complete the required attention check. The participants ages ranged from 19 years old to 76 years old, with an average age of 36 years old. There were similar numbers of males and females, with 154 males and 176 female participants. The participants were majority white/Caucasian (222), 38 African American, 19 Hispanic, 19 Asian and 11 identified as other varied ethnicities. Upon completion, participants were given a monetary payment as compensation for their participation in the current study. Participants were excluded from the analysis if they did not complete the attention check by briefly writing a short explanation on why they made the decision for which reputation they care more about between warmth and competence. If our data indicate duplicate IP addresses with identical responses to the demographic items (e.g., age, gender) the latter of the responses (in terms of date) will be dropped from analyses. Participants under the age of 18 will be excluded from analyses.

Measures

Socio-sexual orientation. Socio-sexual orientation was assessed using the SSOI-R (Penke & Asendorpf, 2008), this is the revised version of the original SSOI, containing nine items that assess three domains; desire, attitude and behaviour. Socio-sexual orientation scores were calculated according to the SSOI-R instructions (Penke & Asendorpf, 2008). Items 1-3 were aggregated to form the behaviour variable, items 4-6 were aggregated to form the attitude variable and then items 7-9 were aggregated to form the desire variable. For each participant, those three variables were then averaged to get a total socio-sexual orientation score.

Trade-off decisions. The three primary dependent variables assessed reputational protection, each measured by a composite of five dichotomous sacrificial decisions regarding participants protection of their sexual warmth reputation, sexual competence reputation and moral sexual reputation. Each domain of reputation protection is measured using five trade-off items where the participant will select either reputational damage or another sacrifice to protect their reputation. The trade-offs tested the extent to which people are willing to sacrifice to protect each of the three domains of reputation (warmth, competence, morality). The responses to these items were aggregated to form 3 reputational domains. The decisions were coded as 1 (reputation protection) and 0 (no reputation protection). The trade-off measures did not reach the acceptable threshold of reliability with Cronbach's $\alpha = .643$ (warmth), $.629$ (competence) and $.682$ (morality). Although these measures did not reach acceptance, the exploratory analysis of the trade-off decisions predicting socio-sexual orientation has still been conducted but is seen as limited as the measures did not reach reliability. The measures not reaching reliability may be because they are dichotomous variables and therefore are less reliable and less sensitive, but the measures are face valid.

Reputation concern. The mediator variable of reputation concern was measured in two ways with the same expected results. Reputation concern (part 1) used a 10-point Likert scale with 3 items for each domain of reputation (9 items in total). These items were aggregated within each domain to create 3 constructs; sexual warmth concern, sexual competence concern, and moral sexual concern. Reputation concern (part 2) contained three items that asked participants to choose which reputation they care more about (given the context); moral sexual reputation vs sexual competence reputation, moral sexual reputation vs sexual warmth reputation, and sexual competence reputation vs sexual warmth reputation. The reputation concern measures were all found to be reliable, Cronbach's $\alpha = .851$ (warmth concern), $.932$ (competence concern), and $.892$ (morality concern).

Procedure. The current study used a series of trade-offs where participants are asked to choose between a sacrifice/reputation protection and no reputation protection. The survey contains five sets of three trade-off decisions, twelve items on reputation concern, SSOI-R items and demographic variables including; age, gender, relationship status, religiosity, political views, which all may have an influence on the way that individuals make decisions based around sex and relationships. The study took approximately five minutes for participants to complete.

Design. The design of the current study was a between-subjects correlation design. The study examined the relationship between the three primary dependent variables; sexual warmth reputation, sexual competence reputation and moral sexual reputation, the mediator variable of reputation concern and an individual's socio-sexual orientation score.

Pre-registration. This study was pre-registered at <https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=xk5mp7>.

Results

Study 1 investigated whether individual differences predict what people are willing to sacrifice in order to protect different facets of their sexual reputation. It specifically examined whether an individual's socio-sexual orientation score predicts which domain (warmth, competence, morality) of their reputation they are willing to sacrifice to protect. The relationship between reputation concern and socio-sexual orientation was also explored as a predictor and as a mediator between socio-sexual orientation and reputation protection. All of the analyses were conducted using JAMOV statistical package.

Predictors of reputation concern. Individual linear regressions were conducted exploring each of the within-subject factors, both as reputation protection and concern (warmth, competence, morality) and socio-sexual orientation. As predicted, more sexually restricted individuals (low SSOI scores) were more concerned with their sexual warmth than

unrestricted individuals, $F(1,307)=17.7$, $p<.001$, $R^2=.054$, see Figure 1. The more sexually unrestricted participants were, the more they were concerned about with their reputation for sexual competence, $F(1,307)=6.91$, $p=.009$, $R^2=.022$ (Figure 1). Lastly, the more sexually restricted participants were, the more they were concerned about their sexual morality reputation, $F(1,307)=16$, $p<.001$, $R^2=.049$, see Figure 1. Both sexual warmth concern and moral sexual concern show a strong negative relationship with socio-sexual orientation, where socio-sexual orientation increases, concern for reputation decreases. The opposite is shown in the positive relationship between socio-sexual orientation and sexual competence reputation concern, where socio-sexual orientation increases so does concern for sexual competence. These patterns of relationships are what is predicted in terms of goal orientation as more sexually restricted participants should be highly concerned about sexual warmth and more sexually unrestricted participants should be highly concerned about sexual competence. However, the pattern of sexual morality concern was not predicted as it was thought that this would be similar across all levels of socio-sexual orientation, but it is clearly displaying a strong negative relationship with socio-sexual orientation.

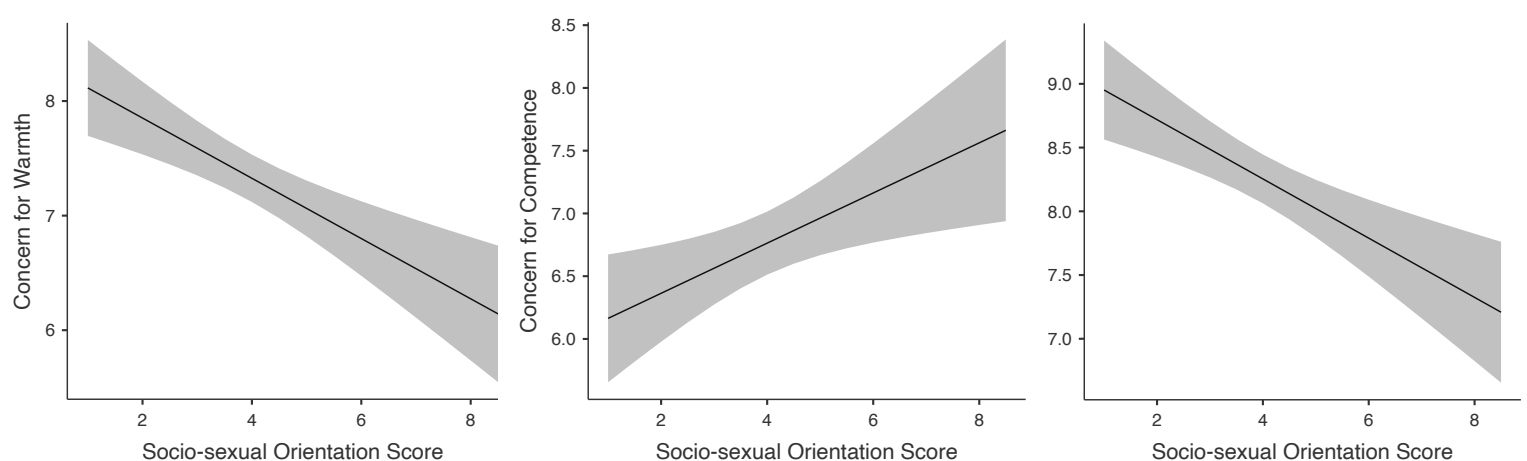


Figure 1. SSOI predicting sexual warmth reputation concern, sexual competence reputation concern, moral sexual reputation concern linear regression relationships.

Predictors of reputation protection. Individual linear regressions were also calculated for each of the trade-off constructs (warmth, competence, morality). The results indicate that all of the predicted effects were in the expected direction, however, none of the effects were found to be statistically significant. We predicted that participants who were more sexually restricted, would be more willing to protect their sexual warmth reputation, $F(1,307)=.0619, p=.804, R^2=0$ (see Figure 2). Similarly, it was predicted that participants who were sexually unrestricted, would be more willing to protect their sexual competence reputation but again this relationship was non-significant, $F(1,307)=1.73, p=.189, R^2=.0056$, see Figure 2. Lastly, moral sexual reputation protection was examined, and this model was also shown to be non-significant, $F(1,307)=1.25, p=.264, R^2=.00405$ (see Figure 2). It is evident that none of the trade-off decisions were significantly predicted from socio-sexual orientation. Although the pattern of results was consistent with the predictions (and the relationships displayed between reputation concern and socio-sexual orientation), these analyses were not significant. This may be due to the low reliability of the dichotomous trade-off measures.

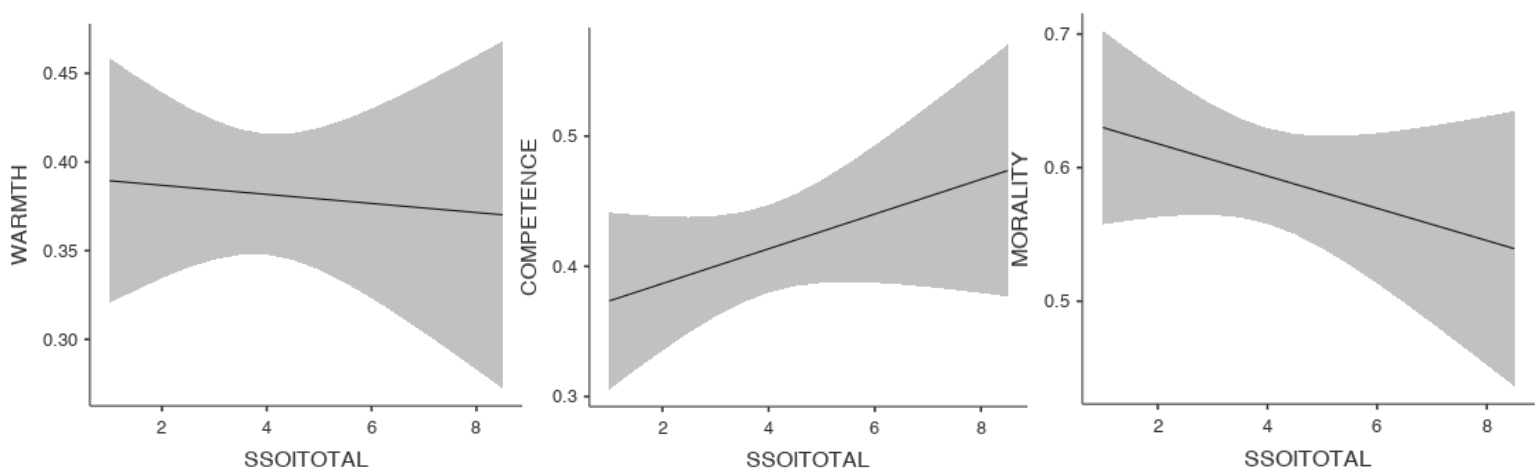


Figure 2. SSOI predicting sexual warmth reputation protection, sexual competence reputation protection, moral sexual reputation protection linear regression relationships.

Mediation Analysis. As predicted, there was a significant indirect effect of socio-sexual orientation on protecting sexual warmth reputation protection through concern about sexual warmth reputation, ($\beta=-.07$, $z=-3.32$, $p<.001$) (see Figure 3). Participants who were more sexually restricted were more concerned about their reputation for warmth ($\beta=-.23$, $z=-4.19$, $p<.001$) and therefore willing to sacrifice more to protect their reputation for sexual warmth, ($\beta=.30$, $z=5.41$, $p<.001$). After controlling for the indirect effect, there was not a significant remaining direct effect of an individual's socio-sexual orientation score on protecting warmth ($\beta=.06$, $z=1.00$, $p=.315$). The model shows that concern for sexual warmth reputation mediates the relationship between socio-sexual orientation score and protection of one's sexual warmth reputation.

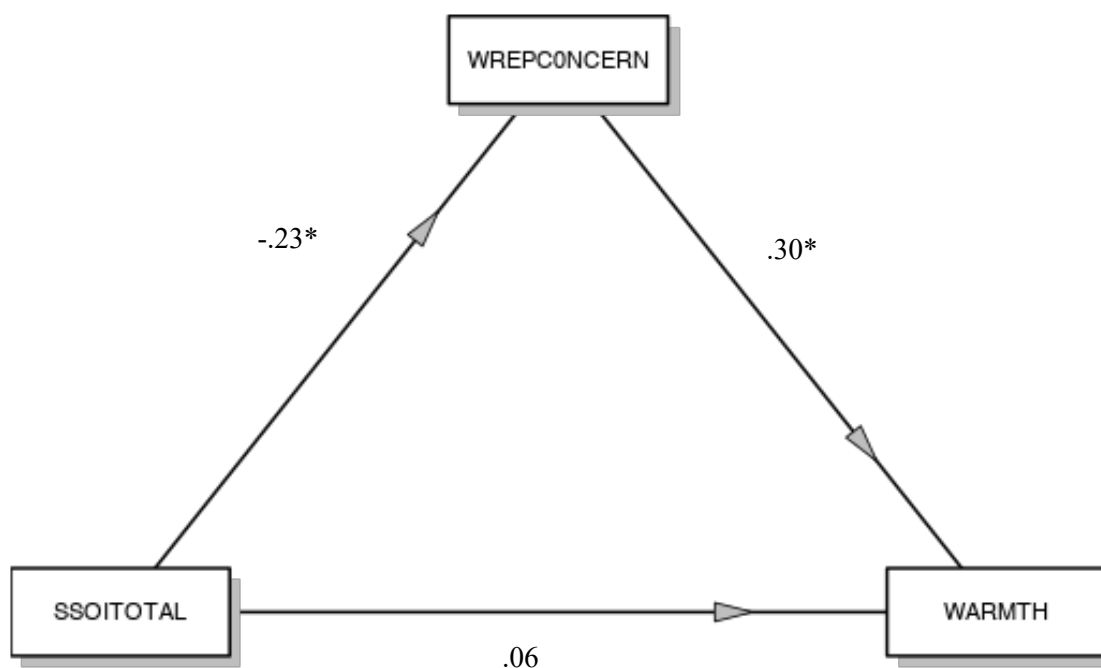


Figure 3. Mediation model showing that concern for sexual warmth mediated the relationship between SSOI score and sexual warmth reputation protection.

Similarly, there was a significant indirect effect of socio-sexual orientation score on protecting sexual competence reputation protection through concern about sexual competence

reputation, ($\beta=.07$, $z=2.53$, $p=0.012$) (see Figure 4). Participants who were more sexually unrestricted were more concerned about their reputation for sexual competence ($\beta=.15$, $z=2.64$, $p=.008$) and therefore were willing to sacrifice more to protect their reputation for sexual competence, ($\beta=.45$, $z=8.81$, $p<.001$). After controlling for the indirect effect, there was not a significant remaining direct effect of an individual's socio-sexual orientation score on protecting sexual competence ($\beta=.01$, $z=0.15$, $p=.879$). The model shows that concern for sexual competence reputation mediates the relationship between socio-sexual orientation score and protection of one's sexual competence reputation.

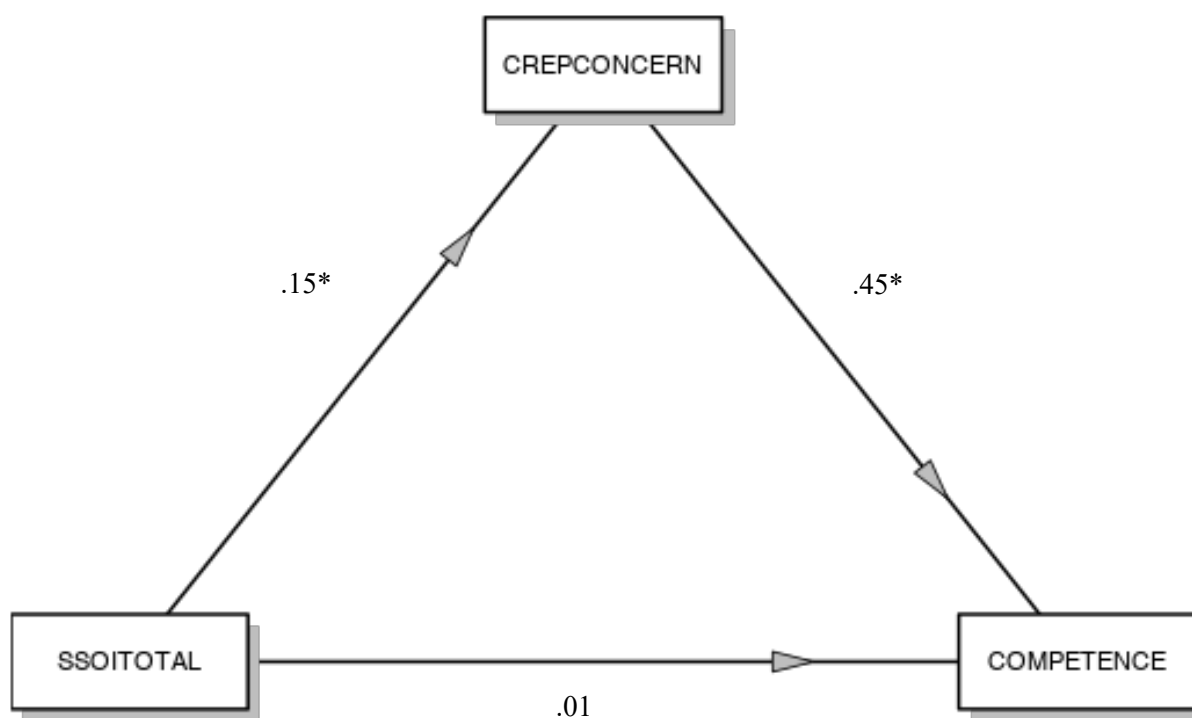


Figure 4. Mediation model showing that concern for sexual competence mediated the relationship between SSOI score and sexual competence reputation protection.

Lastly, as predicted, there was a significant indirect effect of socio-sexual orientation score on protecting moral sexual reputation protection through concern about moral sexual reputation, ($\beta=-.08$, $z=-3.37$, $p<.001$). (see Figure 5). There were also significant effects

between socio-sexual orientation and concern for sexual morality ($\beta = -.22$, $z = -4.02$, $p < .001$) and between concern for sexual morality and moral sexual reputation protection ($\beta = .34$, $z = 6.23$, $p < .001$). After controlling for the indirect effect, there was not a significant remaining direct effect of an individual's socio-sexual orientation score on protecting sexual morality ($\beta = .01$, $z = .23$, $p = .819$). The model shows that concern for moral sexual reputation mediates the relationship between socio-sexual orientation and protection of one's moral sexual reputation. The significant findings from the mediation models corroborates the predicted pattern of results found in the linear regression analysis, with both the significant reputation concern regressions and the non-significant trade-off regressions.

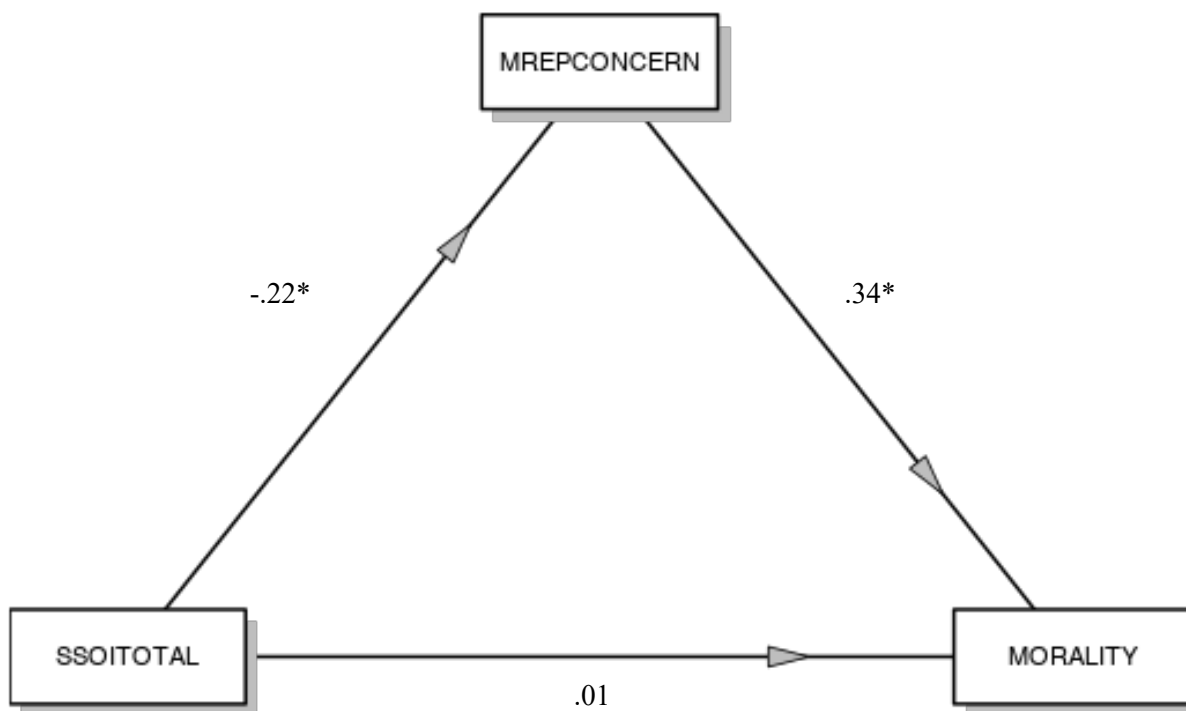


Figure 5. Mediation model showing that concern for sexual morality mediated the relationship between SSOI score and moral sexual reputation protection.

Exploratory analysis looked at the effect of gender on the trade-off decisions predicted by socio-sexual orientation. A repeated measures ANOVA was conducted that looked at the three within subject factors (Competence, Warmth, Morality) predicted by

socio-sexual orientation, with a between subjects' factor of gender. There was a significant within subject's interaction effect between the trade-offs and gender, $F(2,610)=5.35, p=.005$ and a significant between subjects' effect of gender $F(1,305)=21.35, p<.001$. Interestingly, females showed less protection than males across all aspects of reputation. Conversely, the same analysis was run to see whether there was a difference in gender for the reputation concern measures predicted by socio-sexual orientation. This analysis resulted in a non-significant interaction between reputation concern and gender, $F(2,612)=1.32, p=.268$ and a non-significant between subjects' effect of gender $F(1,306)=1.80, p=.180$. This analysis shows that both genders care equally about their reputations for sexual competence, sexual warmth and sexual morality.

Discussion

This study found relationships between an individual's socio-sexual orientation and which facet of their reputation they were more willing to protect. As expected, participants who were relatively sexually restricted were more concerned about their sexual warmth reputation than sexually unrestricted participants were. This result supports the hypothesis that people who are more sexually restricted are more likely to seek long term relationships and have less sexual partners, and therefore will prioritise their sexual warmth reputation in order to achieve this goal. As predicted, increased concern about warmth reputation mediated increased reputation protective decisions. However, there was no significant effect of socio-sexuality on reputation protective decisions, possibly due to the unexpectedly low reliability of the decision measure.

Also as expected, participants who were more sexually unrestricted were more concerned about their sexual competence reputation than sexually restricted participants were. Again, this finding is in line with study hypothesis as people who are more sexually unrestrictive are likely to have more casual sexual relationships and therefore will be more

concerned about their sexual competence reputation as it is an important aspect of achieving this relationship goal. As predicted, both concerns mediated increased reputation protection decisions.

One result that was unpredicted was that participants who were more sexually restrictive were more concerned about their moral sexual reputation than participants who were more sexually unrestrictive. Although the finding is not what was expected, it is not entirely unreasonable that people who are seeking long term relationships would be more concerned about their sexual morality if seeking a long term relationship is more future-oriented than seeking a short term relationship. Recent research found that people who think more about the future consequences of their actions are more willing to protect their moral reputation from harm (Vonasch & Sjøstad, 2019). This could explain why we found a difference in concern for moral sexual reputation between sexually restrictive and sexually unrestrictive participants. Perhaps because sexually restrictive people are more concerned about their moral reputation because they are pursuing a more future-oriented goal (a partner for the long term) than sexually unrestrictive people are seeking (a partner for the short term).

The reputation protection measures were all found to be non-significant, although the pattern of results was consistent with the relationships displayed between reputation concern and socio-sexual orientation. We found that sexually restricted participants were more willing to protect their sexual warmth reputation and sexually unrestricted participants were more willing to protect their sexual competence reputation. These relationships, although they are non-significant, are showing that people who are more likely to be in long term relationships are more willing to protect their sexual warmth reputation and people who are more likely to be in short term, casual sexual relationships are more likely to protect their sexual competence reputation. Again, it was found that sexual morality was protected at a higher level by participants who were more sexually restrictive. One reason that the reputation

protection analyses were all found to be non-significant, is that the measures of protection were unexpectedly low in reliability. Nonetheless, due to its high face validity, we continued to use the same measure in Study 2.

Mediation analyses showed that sexually unrestricted participants increased concerns about sexual competence led them to sacrifice more to protect their sexual competence reputation. This pattern of results was the same for both sexual warmth and sexually morality with reputation concern significantly mediating the relationship between socio-sexuality and reputation protection.

The study, while producing strong relationships between socio-sexuality and reputation concern, was limited in its correlational design and therefore the causality of the relationships cannot be determined. Study 2 will address this as it is a conceptual replication of Study 1, where we manipulated socio-sexuality rather than measure it to determine the direction of the relationships found here. We predicted that manipulating participants socio-sexuality by having two relationship strategy conditions (long term relationship vs short term relationship) will have an impact on which aspects of their sexual reputation they will be more concerned about and therefore more willing to protect (as shown in Study 1)

Study 2: Manipulation experiment

This study built off the findings in Study 1 by experimentally manipulating rather than measuring whether people were seeking a short term relationship versus a long term relationship. The previous study found correlational support for the hypothesis that people who were more sexually restrictive (i.e. seeking a long term relationship rather than a short term one) were more concerned about their sexual warmth reputation than people who were sexually unrestrictive; and that people who were more sexually unrestricted (i.e. seeking a short term relationship rather than a long term one) were more concerned for their sexual competence reputation. Study 2 will use the correlational findings to test causality between

sexual reputation protection and concern and relationship goals. The method and measures were very similar, but participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: seeking a short term relationship versus seeking a long term relationship.

The predicted results were mostly similar to Study 1. Firstly, we predict that reputation protection of sexual competence will be higher in the short term relationship condition than the long term relationship condition. We also predict that reputation protection of sexual warmth will be higher in the long term relationship condition than the short term relationship condition. We also made predictions regarding the mediator variable of reputation concern. We predict that increased reputation concern will mediate the increase the respective reputation protection by condition. Furthermore, we predict a positive correlation between concern about moral reputation and protection of moral reputation.

Method

Participants. The current study requested 400 participants via Amazon's Mechanical Turk, however, 505 participants started the experiment. Of the 505 participants, 175 participants were excluded. Of the exclusions, 99 participants did not complete more than 5% of the survey, 47 participants chose to withdraw their data at the end of the survey, and 29 participants did not accurately complete the attention checks. Upon completion, participants were given a monetary payment as compensation for their participation in the experiment. Participants were excluded from the analysis if they did not complete the attention check asking them to accurately describe the relationship context that they have been assigned to. If our data indicate duplicate IP addresses with identical responses to the demographic items (e.g., age, gender) the latter of responses (in terms of date) were be dropped from the analyses. Participants under the age of 18 were excluded from analyses. The participants' ages ranged from 19 years old to 69 years old, with an average age of 36 years old. There were more males than females participating in the study, with 249 males and 155 females.

The participants were majority white/Caucasian (286), 46 African American, 16 Asian, 15 Hispanic and 39 identified as other varied ethnicities.

Measures.

Trade-off decisions. The three primary dependent variables assessed reputational protection, each measured by a composite of five dichotomous sacrificial decisions regarding participants protection of their sexual warmth reputation, sexual competence reputation and moral sexual reputation. The trade-offs tested the extent to which people are willing to sacrifice to protect each of the three domains of reputation (warmth, competence, morality). The responses to these were aggregated to form 3 constructs. The decisions were coded as 1 (reputation protection) and 0 (no reputation protection). The trade-off measures did not reach the acceptable threshold of reliability with Cronbach's alpha = .643 (warmth), .635 (competence), and .674 (morality). Although these measures were not especially reliable. We nonetheless conducted exploratory analyses of participants' trade-offs decisions, though due to low reliability there should be taken with a grain of salt. The reputation protection measures did not reach an acceptable reliability, however they do display face validity.

Reputation concern. The reputation concern measures consists of a 10-point Likert scale with 3 items for each domain of reputation (9 items in total). These items were aggregated within each domain to create 3 constructs; sexual warmth concern, sexual competence concern, and moral sexual concern. The reputation concern measures were all found to be reliable, Cronbach's alpha = .909 (sexual warmth concern), .926 (sexual competence concern), and .932 (sexual morality concern). However,

Procedure. The methods in the current study are the same as Study 1, except that we manipulated the participants' socio-sexuality instead of measuring their individual scores. The study manipulated ones' imagined relationship context which participants then used as the basis of their trade-off decisions. The survey contained five sets of three trade-off

decisions, twelve items on reputation concern and demographic variables including; age, gender, relationship status, religiosity, political views, which all may have an influence on the way that individuals make decisions based around sex and relationships. The study took approximately five minutes for participants to complete.

Design. The design of the current study is a between subjects' experimental design. The three primary dependent variables assessed reputational protection, regarding one's sexual warmth reputation, sexual competence reputation and moral sexual reputation. There is also a mediator variable of reputation concern. The between-subject manipulation is the hypothetical relationship type participants are to imagine they are pursuing. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two between-subject conditions; "imagine you are looking for a long term relationship" vs "imagine you are looking for a short term relationship". The participants were asked to imagine their assigned scenario while answering the reputation protection trade-off questions and the reputation concern measures.

Pre-registration. This study was pre-registered at <https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=xa2bj6>.

Analytical strategy. Study 2 used an experimental design to manipulate the participants relationship strategy goal, they were randomly assigned to either the long term relationship condition or the short term relationship condition. It specifically examines whether the change in relationship goals will affect the decision to protect one's sexual reputation, and if so, which reputation one is more likely to protect. Individual t-tests were conducted to see if there is a statistical difference between the means of the two conditions for each of the 3 domains of reputation concern and reputation protection. The relationship between reputation concern and relationship strategy was also explored as a dependent variable and as a mediator between condition and reputation protection. All of the analyses were conducted using JAMOV statistical package.

Results

Predictors of reputation concern. As predicted, seeking a long term relationship led to higher concern for sexual warmth reputation ($M=7.76$, $SD=1.83$) compared to participants who were seeking a short term relationship ($M=6.49$, $SD=2.36$); $t(327)=-5.39$, $p<.001$, $d=-.59$. Thus, there was a significant difference in sexual warmth reputation concern between the two conditions where there was a higher concern for sexual warmth reputation in the long term relationship condition. Conversely, looking for a short term relationship did not show significantly higher levels of concern for sexual competence reputation ($M=6.91$, $SD=2.22$) compared to the long term relationship condition ($M=6.86$, $SD=2.17$), $t(327)=.213$, $p=.416$, $d=.02$. The results suggest that seeking a short term relationship did not increase one's concern for sexual competence and that overall there were no differences between the groups in concern for sexual competence reputation. Lastly, there was a significant difference in scores for concern for moral sexual reputation between the short term relationship condition ($M=6.83$, $SD=2.46$) and long term relationship condition ($M=8.53$, $SD=1.66$); $t(327)=-7.26$, $p<.001$, $d=-.80$. Thus, seeking a long term relationship led to higher levels of concern for moral sexual reputation.

A mixed model measures ANOVA was conducted to explore how the reputation concern domains differed between conditions. There was a within-subjects factor of the three domains of reputation concern (warmth concern, competence concern, moral concern) and a between-subjects factor (seeking a short term relationship versus long term relationship). There was a significant interaction between domain and type of relationship sought, $F(2, 654)=31.0$, $p<.001$ (see Figure 6). Post-hoc tests were conducted to unpack the interaction. For the long term relationship condition, significant differences were found between warmth concern and moral concern ($t=-4.60$, $p<.001$), between competence concern and moral concern ($t=-9.98$, $p<.001$), and between competence concern and warmth concern ($t=-5.38$,

$p < .001$). Where sexual morality was of a higher concern than both sexual warmth and sexual competence, and sexual warmth was of a higher concern than sexual competence for people seeking a long term relationship. For the short term relationship condition, there were no significant differences found between any of the reputation concern variables; warmth concern and moral concern ($t = -2.12, p = .276$), competence concern and moral concern ($t = .478, p = .997$), and competence concern and warmth concern ($t = 2.60, p = .098$). However, the relationship pattern shows that sexual competence was of the highest concern, followed by sexual morality and of the least concern was sexual warmth for participants seeking a short term relationship.

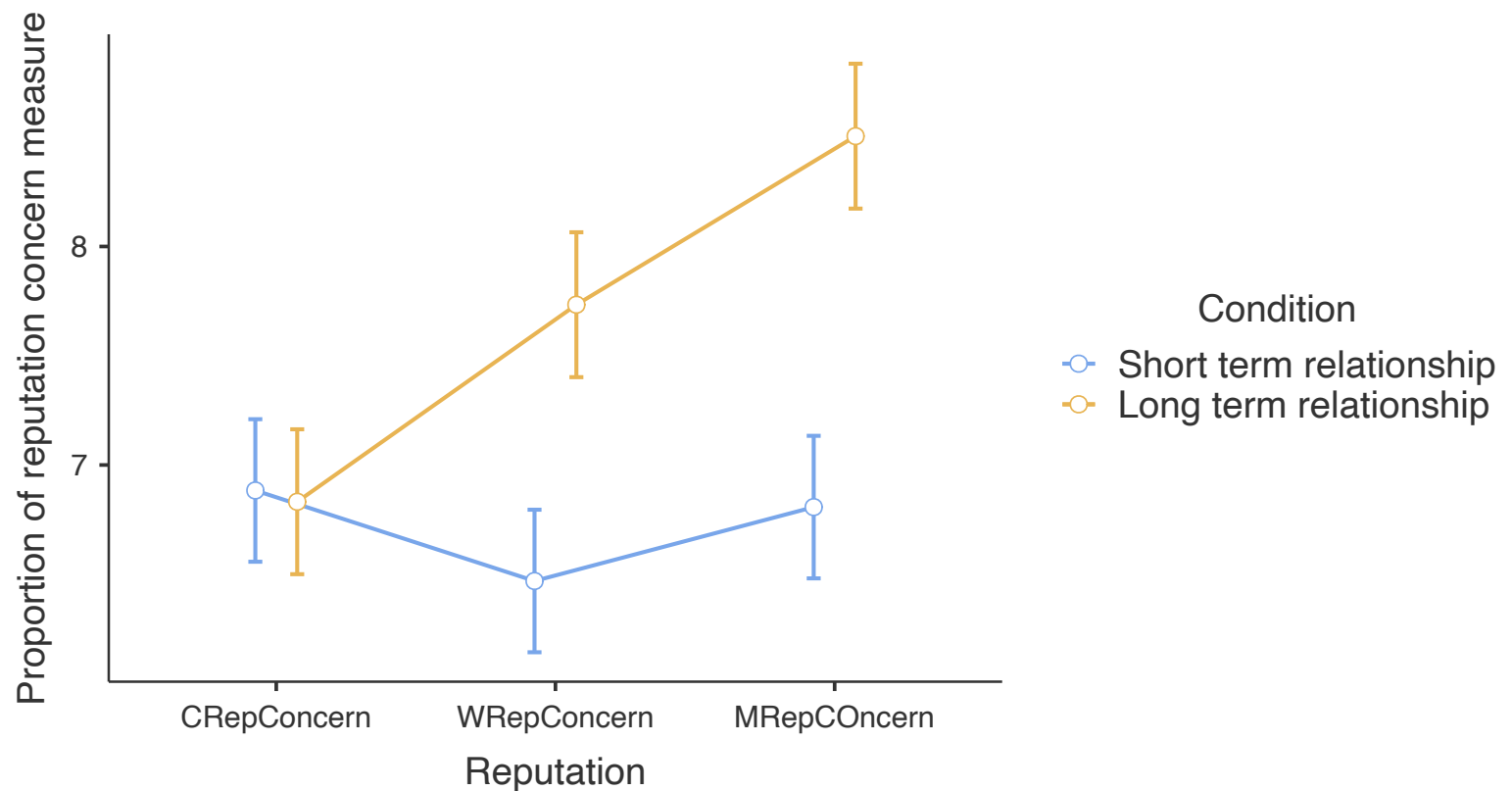


Figure 6. Estimated marginal means table for reputation concern measures (competence, warmth and morality) interacting with condition.

Predictors of reputation protection. As predicted, seeking a long term relationship led to higher protection of sexual warmth reputation ($M = .500, SD = .317$) compared to those in the short term relationship condition ($M = .351, SD = .288$); $t(327) = -4.45, p < .001, d = -.49$.

Unexpectedly, seeking a short term relationship did not lead to higher levels of protection of one's sexual competence reputation ($M=.410$, $SD=.297$) compared to seeking a long term relationship ($M=.463$, $SD=.301$); $t(326)=-1.60$, $p=.944$, $d=-.17$. Thus, participants did not differ in how much they protected their sexual competence based on the type of relationship they were seeking. Similarly to the previous study, seeking a long term relationship led to higher levels of protection of moral sexual reputation ($M=.676$, $SD=.298$) compared to participants seeking a short term relationship ($M=.499$, $SD=.316$); $t(327)=-5.19$, $p<.001$, $d=-.57$.

A mixed model measures ANOVA was conducted to explore how the reputation domains differed between conditions. There was a within-subject factor for the three domains of sexual reputation (warmth, competence, morality) and a between-subjects factor (seeking a short term relationship versus a long term relationship). There was a significant interaction between domain and type of relationship condition, $F(2,652)=10.1$, $p<.001$ (see Figure 7). Post-hoc tests were conducted to unpack the interaction. For the long term relationship condition, significant differences were found between warmth and morality ($t=-8.65$, $p<.001$) and competence and morality ($t=-10.29$, $p<.001$), where participants protected their sexual moral reputation more than both sexual warmth and sexual competence when participants are seeking a long term relationship. Competence and warmth were not significantly different ($t=-1.64$, $p=.571$), however, the pattern shows that warmth was protected more than competence. For the short term relationship condition, post hoc tests revealed a significant difference between warmth and morality ($t=-7.65$, $p<.001$) and between competence and morality ($t=-4.60$, $p<.001$), where participants protected their moral sexual reputation more than both warmth and competence when participants are seeking a short term relationship. There was no significant difference between competence and warmth ($t=3.05$, $p=.029$), however the pattern displays a higher level of protection for competence than warmth.

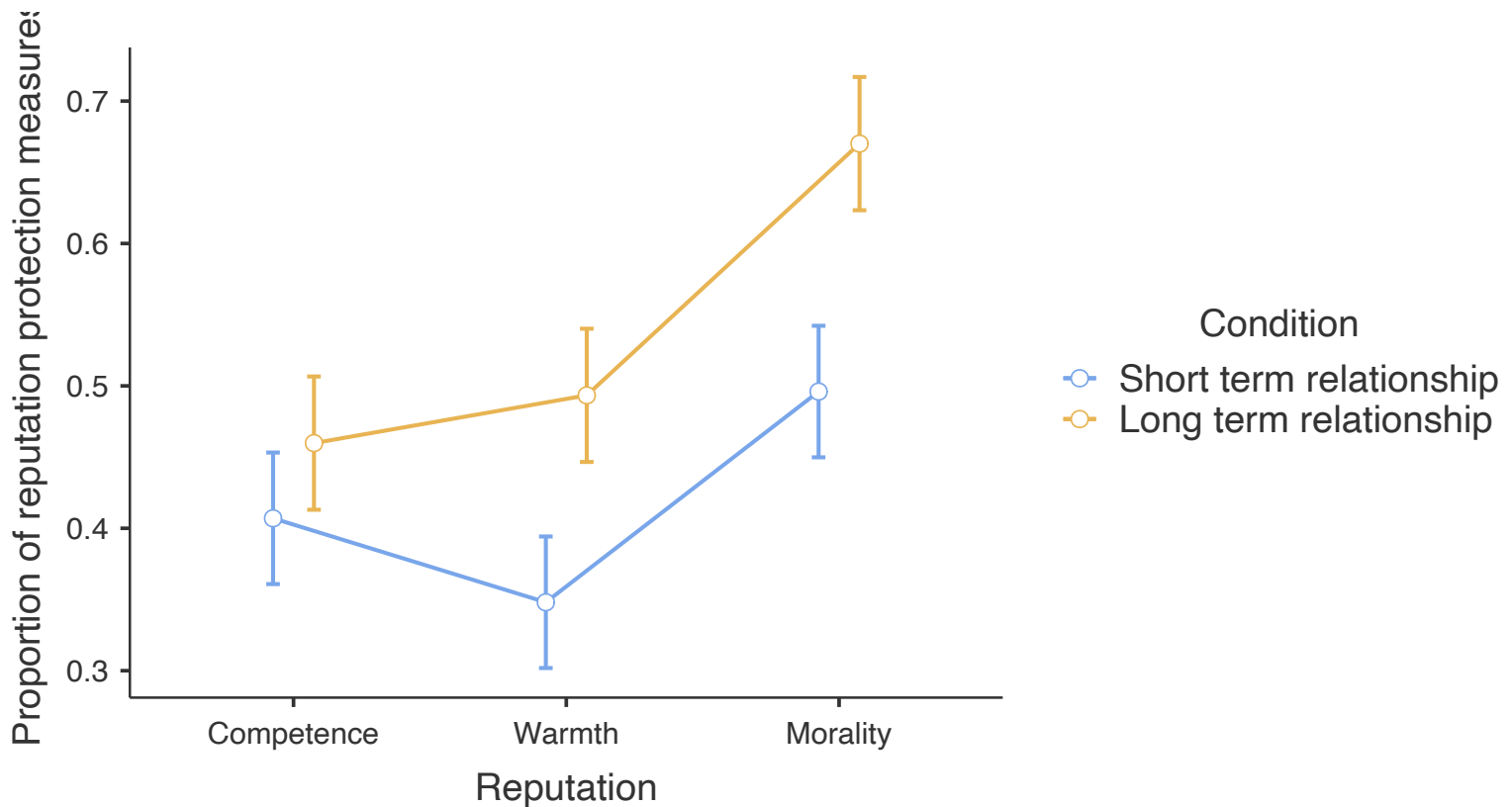


Figure 7. Estimated marginal means table for reputation protection measures interacting with condition.

Mediation Analysis. As predicted, there was a significant indirect effect of condition on protecting sexual warmth reputation protection through concern about sexual warmth reputation, ($\beta=.09$, $z=4.13$, $p<.001$) (see Figure 8). Participants in the long term relationship condition were more concerned about their reputation for sexual warmth ($\beta=.29$, $z=5.41$, $p<.001$) and therefore were willing to sacrifice more to protect their reputation for sexual warmth ($\beta=.34$, $z=6.39$, $p<.001$). After controlling for the indirect effect, there was still a significant remaining direct effect of condition on protecting sexual warmth ($\beta=.14$, $z=2.71$, $p=.007$), showing that reputation concern partially mediated reputation protection.

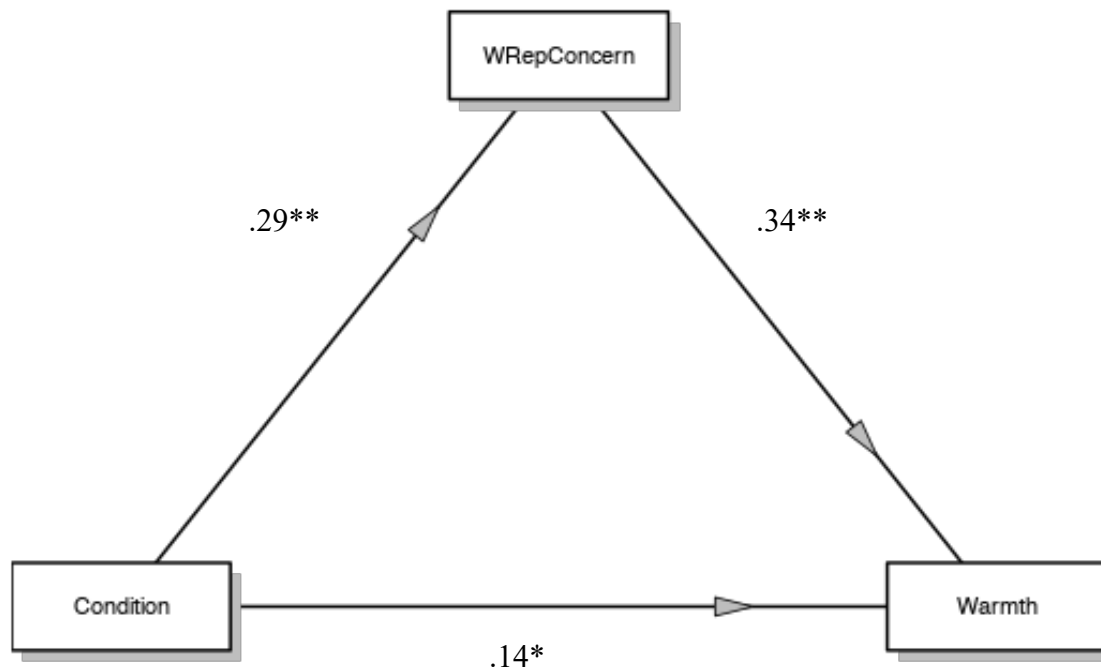


Figure 8. Mediation model showing that concern for sexual warmth mediated the relationship between condition and sexual warmth reputation protection.

As predicted, there was a significant indirect effect of condition on protecting moral sexual reputation protection through concern about moral sexual reputation, ($\beta=.12$, $z=4.54$, $p<.001$; see Figure 9). Participants in the long term relationship condition were more concerned about their reputation for sexual morality ($\beta=.37$, $z=7.28$, $p<.001$) and therefore were willing to sacrifice more to protect their reputation for sexual morality ($\beta=.32$, $z=5.80$, $p<.001$). After controlling for the indirect effect, there was still a significant remaining direct effect of condition on protecting sexual morality ($\beta=.16$, $z=2.9$, $p=.004$). The model shows that concern for moral sexual reputation mediates the relationship between the manipulated

relationship strategy condition and protection of one's moral sexual reputation, however, condition still has a significant effect on protection of sexual morality by itself

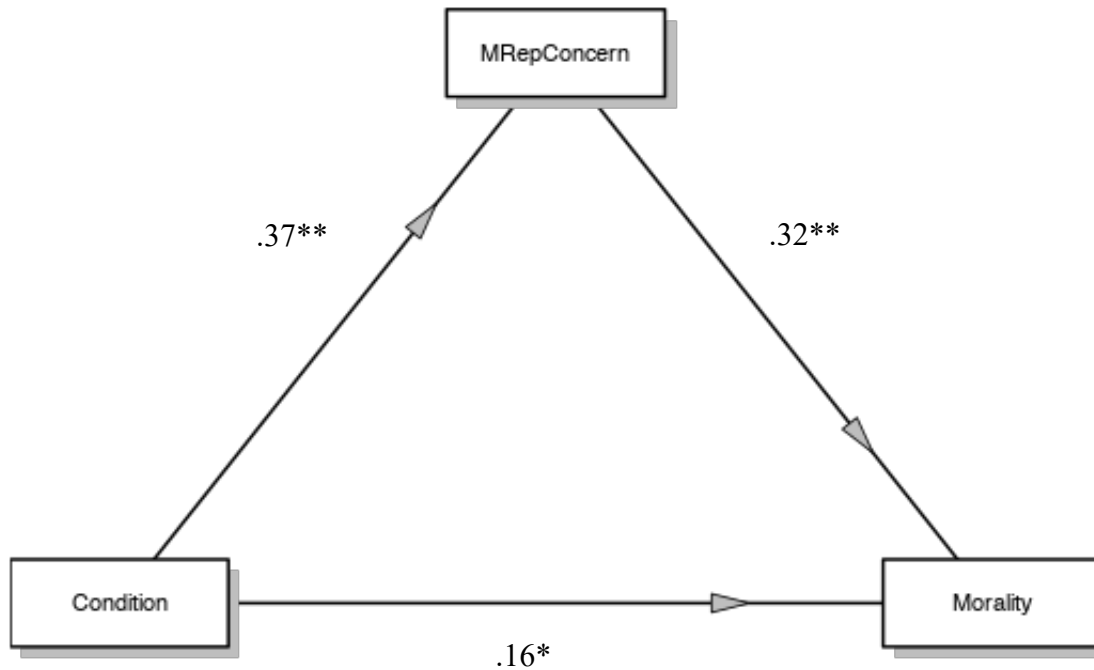


Figure 9. Mediation model showing that concern for sexual morality mediated the relationship between condition and moral sexual reputation protection.

However, contrary to what was predicted, there was not a significant indirect effect of condition on protecting sexual competence reputation through concern about sexual competence reputation, ($\beta = -.01$, $z = -.23$, $p = .822$) (see Figure 10). Participants in the long term relationship condition were not more concerned about their reputation for sexual competence ($\beta = -.01$, $z = -.23$, $p = .821$) however, participants who were more concerned about sexual competence were more willing to sacrifice more to protect their reputation for sexual competence ($\beta = .44$, $z = 8.91$, $p < .001$). After controlling for the indirect effect, there was an almost significant remaining direct effect of condition on protecting sexual competence ($\beta = .09$, $z = 1.89$, $p = .058$). The model shows that concern for sexual competence reputation did not mediate the relationship between the manipulated condition and protection of sexual competence reputation. However, there was an effect of concern for sexual competence and

protection of sexual competence and an almost significant direct effect of condition on protection of sexual competence reputation.

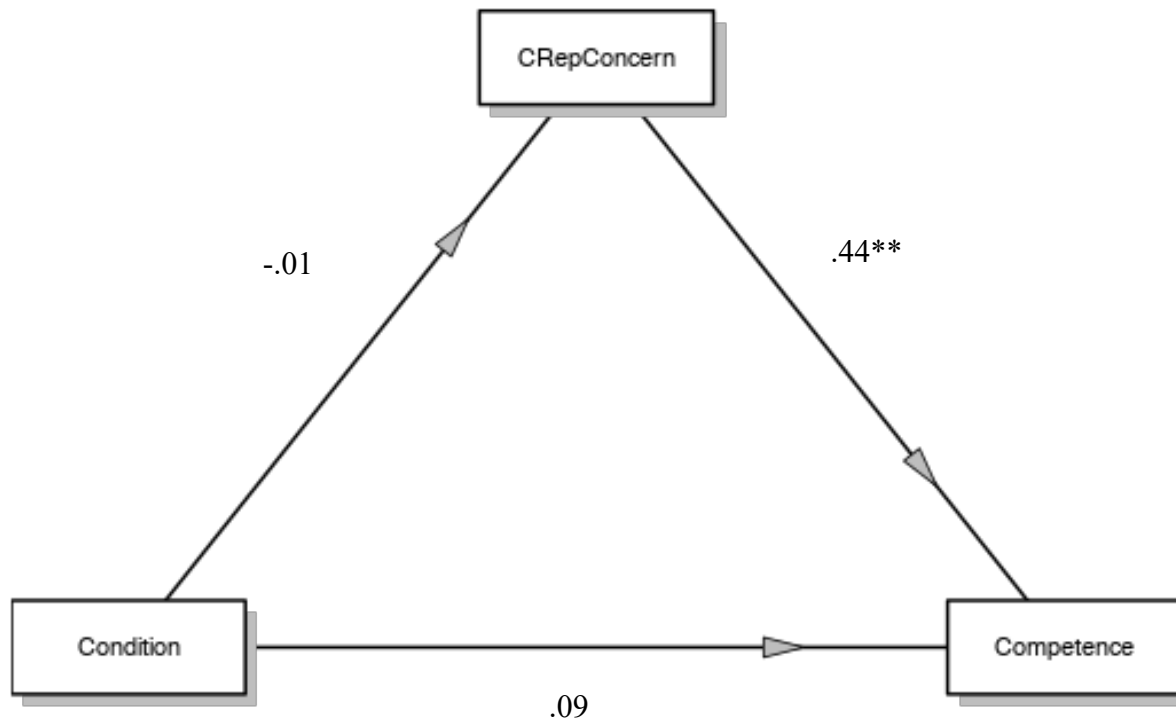


Figure 10. Mediation model showing that concern for sexual competence did not mediate the relationship between condition and protection of sexual competence reputation.

Exploratory analyses of gender differences. Exploratory analysis looked at the effect of gender on the trade-off decisions predicted by condition. A repeated measures ANOVA was conducted that looked at the three within-subject factors (Competence, Warmth, Morality) predicted by condition, with a between-subjects factor of gender. There was not a significant interaction effect between the trade-offs and gender, $F(2,650)=1.54$, $p=.215$, but there was a significant between-subjects effect of gender, $F(1,325)=13.2$, $p<.001$). This shows a significant difference between males and females on their reputation protection decisions between the two conditions, where males had higher overall protection for all three reputational domains compared to females. This difference was also found for the reputation protection measures in Study 1. Conversely, the same analysis was run to see

whether there was a difference in gender for the reputation concern measures predicted by condition. This analysis resulted in a non-significant interaction effect between reputation concern and gender, $F(2,652)=15.77, p=.162$, and an almost significant between subjects' effect of gender, $F(1,326)=3.66, p=.057$. This analysis shows that there were not any significant gender differences in the participants reputation concern about their sexual competence, sexual warmth and sexual morality within-subjects but there was a difference in gender for the reputation protection measures.

Discussion

The results were mostly consistent with Study 1, with the exception of concern about sexual competence. As expected, participants imagining that they were seeking a long term relationship were more concerned and more protective of their sexual warmth reputation than participants seeking a short term relationship. Mediation analyses showed that participants seeking a long term relationship had increased concerns about sexual warmth which led them to sacrifice more in order to protect their sexual warmth reputation. This builds on the previous findings by supporting the idea that the type of relationship that people are seeking is not only is associated with more concern about appearing sexually warm, but that seeking a long term relationship causes people to become more concerned about others thinking that they are sexually warm.

Replicating the unexpected findings in Study 1, participants imagining they were seeking a long term relationship were more concerned and more protective of their moral sexual reputation than those participants' seeking a short term relationship. Mediation analyses showed that participants seeking a long term relationship had increased concern for their sexual morality which led them to sacrifice more in order to protect their moral sexual reputation. Although we did not predict this finding, it is consistent with Study 1 and makes sense with the theory as participants who are seeking a long term relationship, will be more

future-oriented and are therefore more willing to protect their morality (Vonasch & Sjøstad, 2019).

Unexpectedly, unlike Study 1, participants imagining they were seeking a short term relationship were not significantly more concerned or more protective of their sexual competence reputation. Mediation analyses were non-significant, which means that seeking a short term relationship did not increase participants concern or protection of their sexual competence. It is possible that this finding arose due to the hypothetical nature of the conditions. As none of the reputational domains were of a high concern in the short term relationship condition compared to the long term relationship condition, it is possible that participants may have disregarded all concern for reputation as it is a hypothetical short term relationship and therefore they had nothing to lose. It is also not unreasonable for participants who imagined they were seeking a long term relationship to still be concerned about sexual competence and this may be why we did not find a difference in competence between conditions.

Overall, levels of concern about the different domains of reputation were as predicted (whether they were significant or not). Participants who were asked to imagine they were seeking a long term relationship were most concerned about their sexual morality, followed by their sexual warmth, and were least concerned for their sexual competence. Participants who were asked to imagine they were seeking a short term relationship were most concerned about sexual competence, followed by sexual morality, and were least concerned for their sexual warmth. Interestingly, in the short term relationship condition, sexual competence and sexual morality were of almost equal concern. This is interesting as it builds on the theory that mating strategies do determine which areas of reputation are of most concern. It would be assumed that morality should always be of a much higher concern than other domains.

This finding however, reiterates that perhaps when people are not thinking of the future then their moral reputation is not prioritised above other domains of reputation.

General Discussion

Across two pre-registered correlational and experimental studies, with a total of 639 participants, the type of romantic relationship people sought influenced their concerns for and protection of their sexual reputation. These findings show that there is a relationship between how people prioritise different aspects of themselves in order to achieve their current relationship goals. People who were seeking a long term relationship prioritised their sexual warmth and morality more than those who were seeking a short term relationship. This prioritisation makes sense as it will help them to achieve their relationship goals, more than if they prioritised their sexual competence over their sexual warmth. Moreover, these results were consistent regardless of whether the type of relationship sought was measured in individual differences or experimentally manipulated.

The evidence regarding concern for sexual competence was mixed. Study 1 found a significant relationship between sexually unrestricted participants and increased concern for sexual competence. However, Study 2 found that sexual competence was not prioritised differently between groups, although it was prioritised over sexual warmth when participants were seeking a short term relationship. This discrepancy between the studies could be due to Study 1 looking at the individual's socio-sexuality, whereas Study 2 gave participants an imagined relationship and this may not have been relevant to the participants own lives. These results may show that competence is equally as important across mating strategies, but sexual warmth and sexual morality are more important when a person is seeking a long term commitment. It is not unreasonable that we found that this was not the case across mating strategies as Study 2 did employ a hypothetical situation and some people may have found it easier to imagine they were seeking a long term relationship than a short term relationship.

This may be because most people eventually end up in a long term committed relationship due to the meaningfulness that social connection brings (Lambert, Stillman, Hicks, Kamble, Baumeister, & Fincham, 2013). Therefore, it may have been difficult for participants to imagine what, if anything, would be important when seeking a short term relationship with no consequences. It was originally thought that morality would be similar across mating strategies as it would seem that one's moral reputation should always be of great concern and therefore people would be willing to make sacrifices to protect it. However, sexual morality was found to be of more concern and people were more willing to sacrifice to protect it when they were seeking a long term relationship. This could be due to people thinking about the future as research has found that people who are more future-oriented are more willing to sacrifice to protect their morality (Vonasch & Sjøstad, 2019). Our findings, although unpredicted, are in line with current research in future orientations and reputation protection.

The three domains of reputation that were used in the current study (competence, warmth and morality) were derived from previous literature that found that these traits are important in person perception (Fiske & Cuddy, 2002; Goodwin, 2015). Warmth and competence were found to be of equal importance, even though competence did not have a significant relationship with mating strategies. Morality was found to be of the highest concern within conditions but interestingly, across conditions it was of differing levels of concern. Morality being prioritised over the other aspects of reputation as the most important reputation is what was predicted and it emphasises Goodwin, Piazza, & Rozin's (2014) finding that moral character information is the most important dependent variable of interest in person-perception, impression formation and person evaluation.

There were significant gender differences found between males and females in terms of reputation protection but there was no difference between genders in their concern for the different domains of their sexual reputation. Interestingly, the difference was that males

protected all three domains of reputation at higher levels than females in both studies. This finding is of interest as it does not corroborate with the gender differences found in previous literature. From the previous research it was expected that women would have more concern for their sexual warmth and men would have a higher concern for their sexual competence (Garcia & Carrigan, 2008). Women having less concern for their sexual warmth and morality in the current research, goes against the stereotyped sexual reputation responses that other studies have found. Previously, females have been found to perceive themselves highly in warmth, and to use reputation protection in the form of “redemptive chastity” as a way of reversing any sexual behavior she had already engaged in (Reid, Elliot, Webber, 2011), to decrease the idea that she sleeps around and would therefore be potentially seen as sexually cold. This finding may have occurred because the culture around gendered sexuality has reduced through feminist movements and further sexual education. There is potential that women may now have less concern about their sexual reputation in general as they have started to become free of the feelings of shame, guilt and embarrassment (Pham, 2017) that had been prominent in the past. Research has found that males make different sacrifices in order to protect their reputation than females (Vonasch, Reynolds, Winegard, & Baumeister, 2017). The current research may be similar to these findings, and this may be due to the types of sacrifices used, that males were more willing to make large sacrifices to protect their sexual reputation than females were. However, this gender difference may also be because the reputation protection measures cannot be considered reliable and therefore may not reflect the true nature of gender differences.

Implications. It has been previously shown how one’s reputation is integral in helping and hindering social connections and unlocking benefits within a community, so people have a drive to protect it with great vigilance (Wu, Balliet & Lange, 2016). Our social connections can be considered one of the most important parts of being a human being and these

connections (or lack thereof) can have a huge impact on people's lives. The current findings add to this literature by focusing on sexual connections and show how protection of one's reputation can change due to which goal they are trying to obtain. The studies were conducted under the assumption that people manage the impression that they make on others strategically. This is because impression management is dependent on goal relevance, desired outcomes and any discrepancy between a current image and what one desires to portray (Leary & Kowalski, 1990). This was shown through the prioritising of specific domains of sexual reputation depending on the specific goals that they were trying to accomplish. These results support this idea of impression management being goal specific and adds to the literature on the protection of sexual reputation.

Previously, it was found that people were willing to sacrifice their own lives in order to protect their moral reputation. The current study found that people who were more sexually restricted and looking for long term relationships were more concerned for and protective of the moral sexuality. Therefore, people who were more unrestricted and looking for short term relationships actually prioritised other aspects of their reputation over morality. This may mean that although in general one's moral reputation is protected over other areas, it does not apply to sexual reputation (at least in the context of the current study). This reiterates the findings on impressions being managed strategically so perhaps people who are more sexually unrestricted and looking for casual sexual encounters are less likely to be strategically managing their moral sexual reputation as it will not add to accomplishing their current sexual goal. This finding supports the research by Vonasch & Sjøstad (2019), where they found that people who are thinking about the future are more likely to protect their moral reputation. As sexually unrestricted individuals are more likely to have short term sexual relationships with several partners, then they may not be thinking about the long term consequences and therefore their moral sexual reputation is not at the fore front of their

impression management. We would like to assume that people are innately good and therefore moral, but it seems that this may be dependent on the situation and the current goals that an individual is striving to achieve. It would be beneficial to look at protection of reputation in other areas of life because it may be that other domains of reputation will be prioritised over morality in other specific contexts as well.

Applications. This area of research can be used in evolutionary psychology to assess how competitive mating strategies work when individuals have different relationship goals (Wyckoff, Buss & Asao, 2018). Women and men use aggression in the form of gossip. This is evident when females are competing for a mate (Reynolds, Baumeister, 2018). However, the use of gossip, to slander a competitor's reputation, may only be an effective strategy if you know what type of relationship the other person is looking for and therefore what aspects of their reputation they will be most concerned about. If a competitor knows what type of relationship the other person is seeking, then they can strategically slander those areas of their sexual reputation to cause the most harm. For example, if someone was seeking a short term relationship, then it would be most effective to diminish areas of their sexual competence, whereas if they are looking for a long term relationship then it would be most effective to diminish their sexual warmth and morality. This area of research may further our insight into how humans evolve their mating strategies, especially when competing for mates, as not every individual is willing to protect the same aspects of their sexual reputation.

The relationship between one's current goals and prioritisation of different aspects of reputation may not apply solely to sexual reputation. There are many domains where strategic protection of reputation may apply. One area where this may apply is in people's careers. It may be beneficial to prioritise competence over warmth if you are applying for a highly competitive career opportunity. Or similar to this study, where people are seeking or in a job

that they see a future in, then they may prioritise morality as their highest concern and warmth and competence equally.

Limitations. The current studies did have several limitations that should be considered when discussing the findings of the studies. Firstly, although the measures of reputation concern were highly reliable, we also included face-valid dichotomous measures of people's reputation protective trade-offs. Likely due to the dichotomous nature of these measures, reliability was lower than ideal. A future study may look at different ways of measuring reputation protection that do not include small numbers of dichotomous variables. The decisions that participants were asked to make were also hypothetical which can be seen as a limitation as some participants may not answer seriously as they may believe the situation to be unlikely to occur or unrelated to their own lives.

Another limitation was that the participants were all Americans recruited online on Amazon's Mechanical Turk. As the sample contained mostly participants who identified as Caucasian ethnicity and were an average age of 36 years old, we need to look at the results with caution. Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan (2010) identified WEIRD (Western, educated, institutionalized, rich, democratic) populations as some of the most psychologically unusual people on earth and therefore the results from studies using a mostly WEIRD population do not have a large stretch of generalizability as they do not take into account the different psychological processes of people from other countries (Henrich, Heine, Norenzayan, 2010). This research could be conducted within a different country and age group to be able to compare and generalize results across a more diverse range of people. In saying this, the use of Amazon's Mechanical Turk has been found to recruit a diverse and more representative population than those of typical internet and traditional samples like university students (Buhrmester, Kwang & Gosling, 2011). It has also been found that the reliability of the data was also improved with attention checks and the option to have data removed, it was found

that participants were more diligent when they had to prove their attentiveness (Rouse, 2015). Using Amazon's Mechanical Turk is an effective way of recruiting a large sample size, the current research had a total of 639 participants, in a cost effective and timely manner.

Furthermore, the analyses were limited by conducting a simplified analysis in Study 1 rather than the use of hierarchical modeling. Hierarchical modeling can display which reputation domain was being protected at different levels of socio-sexual orientation scores which would have given more insight into the pattern of protection and concern than the linear regression models gave. We suggest future researchers may be able to conduct more in-depth analyses to see where the individual differences lie. However, Study 2 used an experimental design, where we were able to identify different levels and see a pattern of concern and protection of each of the reputation domains which gave us an indication of the pattern that would have been present in Study 1's correlational relationships.

Future directions. It is evident that humans manage their impressions based on context and goals in mating situations. However, the current study did have its limitations and therefore it would be important to conduct a study with more reliable measurements and more in depth hierarchical modeling analysis in order to determine how much people are protecting one domain of reputation over another. This would mean reconsidering the reputation protection trade-offs or finding a different measure of reputation protection that reaches an acceptable reliability score.

Another aspect that is yet to be explored in the reputation protection literature is how same-sex couples protect their reputation based on goal relevance and whether they differ in their priorities compared to their heterosexual counterparts. The current study found that the majority of participants were heterosexual and this is similar theme through most of the research presented in the paper, so there is a need for more research on homosexual

individuals and same-sex relationships as it cannot be assumed that all sexualities have the same priorities in terms of impression management.

Future research may also consider other aspects of people's lives and how people protect different domains of reputation in these areas. Exploring how people protect their career opportunities may be of interest, as individuals may protect competence over warmth when advancing their career, but this could change depending on their specific career goals. Moral reputation has been found to be protected with the utmost vigilance (Vonasch, Reynolds, Winegard, & Baumeister, 2017) however in the current study it was not always found to be protected over competence and warmth. This is an interesting finding and may show that, depending on the extent of the moral dilemma, people don't always value and protect their moral reputation over other areas of their reputation. This is an area that would need more research as it is important to see which areas of people's lives that they are most willing to forgo their morality in favour of other aspects of their reputation.

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